

MEMORIAL

OF THE

BALTIMORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

AGAINST THE PROPOSED LAW

INCREASING THE DUTIES ON WOOLLEN GOODS

IMPORTED FROM ABROAD.

FEBRUARY 22, 1827.

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1827.

MEMORIAL.

To the honorable the Senate of the United States :

The memorial of the Chamber of Commerce of Baltimore, respectfully represents :

That they view with great concern, and even alarm, the proposed law for the increase of the duties on certain kinds of woollen goods imported from abroad. That this increase, amounting in fact to a prohibition of many articles essential to the comfort of the People of this country, and which cannot, for some years to come, be manufactured in sufficient quantities to meet the demands of mere necessity, will produce the greatest inconvenience and hardship. That this measure will be the more obnoxious, as its more direct operation is on the poorer classes of consumers, on whom it will continue to fall with disproportioned severity, even after the domestic manufactories shall be enabled, by means of the contemplated protection, to afford the requisite supply ; inasmuch as that protection is a virtual tax on the consumer to the whole amount of the difference between the present price and that which will be produced by the contemplated duty. That this measure will be extremely detrimental to the agricultural, the commercial, and the shipping interests of these United States, in which interest is invested an immense capital, equally entitled, in point of principle, as the manufacturing, to the protection of Government, and more so in point of fact, as the amount concerned is larger, and constitutes the dependence of a greater number of citizens.

Your memorialists moreover respectfully suggest, that the frauds on the revenue, resulting from the imposition of the contemplated duties, will be immense ; that they will be highly injurious to morals ; and that they will have the double effect of enhancing prices in proportion of the risk incurred in furnishing this irregular supply, while, at the same time, the evasions of the customs will be of sufficient magnitude to deprive those who may invest their capital in woollen manufactures of the full benefit of the contemplated protection. Thus your memorialists foresee a triple loss to the industry of the country from the bill proposed.

Your memorialists forbear to add to these suggestions, which spring from the experience arising from their more immediate pursuits, the considerations of general policy and justice. Your honorable body is well aware, that the policy of the principle on which this measure proceeds, has been ably disputed by the wisest statesmen, and remains,

to say the least, a matter of doubt. But when, to this consideration, is added the more immediate and important one, of the unequal operation of this bill on the different sections of the country, the dissatisfaction which must thence result, and the prudence of allaying the jealousies which are but too apt to arise in the best ordered confederacies ; they indulge the hope that their own individual interests will be fortified by reflections so just and powerful.

And your memorialists will ever pray.

WM. LORMAN,

President Ch. of Com. Baltimore.

WILLIAM COOKE, *Sec'y C. C.*

Baltimore, February 20, 1827.